

REMARKS

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Claims 1-9, 11-20, 22-27 and 29-47 are pending. In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-9, 11-20, 22-27, 29-38 and 40-47 and objected to Claim 39. Claims 22-25 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Improper Final Rejection

Applicants respectfully contend that the finality of the Office Action is improper. During a telephone conference with the Examiner, Applicants pointed out to the Examiner that the Office Action included new grounds for rejection that were applied to unamended claims. For example, Claim 3 was rewritten in independent format, but was otherwise unamended. The Examiner indicated that Applicants should respond to the Office Action as if it were not a final rejection, due to this oversight.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-6, 9, 11-17, 20, 26, 27, 29-31, 33-38, 44 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,666,516 issued to Combs (“Combs”). Claims 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,475,681 issued to White et al. (“White”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons stated below.

Claim 1 is directed to a communication system that includes a central processor and a signal processor. The central processor is operable to transmit and receive data packets using a first communication bus, and transmit and receive control packets using the second communication bus. Combs does not disclose, teach or suggest each of these limitations.

The Office Action suggests that the control bus of Figure 1A-2 of Combs discloses the second communication bus of the present invention. See Office Action, page 2, lines 19-20. However, the control bus of Combs is not operable to transmit and receive control packets. Instead, the control bus of Combs is used to communicate signals (e.g., GPIO). Thus, there is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Combs, that the control bus is

operable to transmit and receive control packets. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully contend that Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Combs.

Claims 3, 4 and 11 each include a central processor that is operable to transmit data packets and control packets. As discussed above with regard to Claim 1, Combs does not disclose, teach or suggest that control packets are transmitted or received using the control bus of Combs. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 3, 4 and 11 are each patentably distinguishable from Combs.

Claims 26, 33 and 36 each include limitations related to the transmission of control packets over a communication bus. As discussed above with regard to Claim 1, Combs does not disclose, teach or suggest transmission of control packets over a bus. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 26, 33 and 36 are each patentably distinguishable from Combs.

Claims 2, 5, 9, 12-17, 20, 27, 29-31, 34-35, 37-38, 44 and 46 each depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of Claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 26, 33, or 36. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above with regard to their respective base claims, Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 2, 5, 9, 12-17, 20, 27, 29-31, 34-35, 37-38, 44 and 46 are each patentably distinguishable from Combs.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 40-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs. Claims 7, 8, 18, 19 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,119,179 issued to Whitridge et al. (“Whitridge”). Claim 45 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,666,366 issued to Malek et al. (“Malek”). Claim 47 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,506,932 issued to Holmes et al. (“Holmes”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons stated below.

Each of these rejections is based upon a mischaracterization of Combs. As discussed above with regard to Claim 1, Combs does not disclose, teach or suggest the transmission or receipt of control packets. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully

contend that Claims 7, 8, 18, 19, 32, 45 and 47 are each patentably distinguishable from the references cited by the Examiner, in support of the rejected claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending Claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicants stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Applicants believe no fees are due. However, should there be a fee discrepancy, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge said fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicants


Chad C. Walters
Reg. No. 48,022

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CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

Customer No.: **05073**
Attorney Docket No. 020095.0132